

**ST. ANNE'S SCHOOL AND SIXTH FORM COLLEGE  
AND RESIDENCE**



**STAFF GUIDANCE NOTES ON THE USE OF THE  
HYDROTHERAPY POOL**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The hydrotherapy pool is used for pupils with special educational needs where access to a public swimming pool is deemed inappropriate due to size, temperature, changing facilities and environment. The pool is also used to meet pupils' therapeutic needs.

Sessions are conducted by staff accompanied by other adults attending in a supportive role. Other adults such as parents and volunteers will have been checked through the safeguarding children procedures. One member of staff must be familiar with calling for assistance if necessary, and be on the pool side throughout every session, whilst the pool is in use

Dimensions of the Hydrotherapy

- Length: 4.96m
- Width 2.5m
- Shallow Depth: 1.200m
- Maximum Depth: 1.200m
- Total swimming surface 12.4 sq metres

Maximum SAFE Bathing Load is determined from the surface area of the pool, and is the maximum number of bathers who can SAFELY be allowed to use a facility of a given surface area. The maximum SAFE Bathing Load for St Anne's Pool is 5 as determined by the risk assessment, and based on the special needs of the young people using the pool.

Should the group leader decide that a higher density is appropriate; the rationale must be documented in the risk assessment. The pool temperature is maintained at approx. 32<sup>o</sup> C with an ambient air temperature at 33<sup>o</sup> C.

## **AIMS**

- To provide opportunities for pupils to explore their environment.
- To develop confidence in the water.
- To promote physiotherapy routines, circulation, exercises and toleration of touch;
- To provide an opportunity for freedom of movement, balance, weight bearing and co-ordination.
- To provide a safe environment for fun and relaxation.
- To promote water based activities including basic water skills and water safety.
- To access national curriculum physical education.

## **STAFF RATIO**

Ratios will be determined by individual pupil / group risk assessment. There will be one person on the pool side and staff will be with pupils in the pool at all times. The number of staff will be determined by the individual pupils risk assessment.

## **RISK MANAGEMENT GUIDANCE**

At the beginning of the academic year all pupils swimming risk assessments will be updated and thereafter as appropriate. Risk assessment is ongoing and should reflect any new need. Forms will be held in the pupil's file on the server.

A copy of the swimming risk assessment is held needs to be in the pool risk assessment file.

Procedures are in place to ensure that the pool is safe and suitable for use prior to each session. These include:-

- A logbook of testing of water.
- The hydrotherapy pool, entrance doors must be closed on entry and when not in use. Failure to do so could lead to a serious accident.
- The main door is an access control door with automatic locking that can be released by the use of a key fob or by pressing the emergency alarm button.
- A suitably qualified member of staff who fulfils the role of group leader must oversee all sessions.
- A member of staff is to be on the pool side during the use of pool.
- Written parental consent is requested at the beginning of each academic year Individual pupil risk assessments must be undertaken. A member of the senior management team must regularly monitor these risk assessments.
- Pupils must be managed in line with these individual pupil risk assessments.
- Medical advice must be followed prior to a pupil participating in sessions in the hydrotherapy pool.
- Guidance from the school nursing service should be considered if any pupil is suffering from additional medical conditions or illness.
- Personal dignity should be respected at all times and staff should change in a separate area.
- Only experienced and trained staff should operate the pool hoist. Moving and handling guidance for individual pupils should be adhered to at all times.
- Any pupil suffering from diarrhoea or sickness must not swim. They must be symptom free for 24hrs.
- In the case of any incontinent accidents or a pupil being sick in the pool evacuate the pool immediately and inform school site manager. This rule also applies if pupils costumes are found to have been soiled on exit from the pool.
- A first aid kit must be available on the poolside. Routines must be in place for checking stock regularly.
- All accidents in the must be reported to school admin office and an accident form completed.
- Shoes should be removed in the seating area outside the pool main door. Overshoes are provided and must be worn by all adults.
- Jewellery should not be worn in the pool.
- Running around the poolside is not allowed.
- Pupils must not enter the water until instructed by the group leader.
- Pupils should not be in the water for longer than 30 minutes.
- Staff should not be in the water for longer than 30 minutes without a 10 minute break.
- Staff should be clear about the emergency procedures, which are displayed in the pool area.
- Antibacterial wipes should be used to clean buoyancy aids before blowing up.
- Any buoyancy equipment that is damaged should be removed and school site manager / caretaker notified. Failed equipment must be destroyed.
- At least once a term all buoyancy aids should be cleaned.
- All equipment must be removed from the water after use and stored in the designated area.
- If interactive sensory equipment is being used this must be carefully supervised at all times.
- The poolside should be tidied after use. No swimwear or towels to be left in any of the pool areas.
- All children and adults must shower before entering the pool
- Staff are to take a jug of drinking water into the pool area to ensure hydration is maintained. The jug should be taken out after each session.
- Staff wearing a T shirt in the pool should ensure that it is white in colour

## RESPONSIBILITIES

Overall responsibility for the safe use of the pool rests with the headteacher who must ensure the following are in place:

- Pool Policy.
- Pool Operating Procedures.
- Pool Emergency Plan.
- Contamination Plan.

### **Headteacher, Assistant heads and Senior Child care manager's responsibility**

- Access to the pool.
- Timetabling and staffing the pool including regular breaks for staff undertaking back to back sessions.
- Risk assessment of pool and pupils.
- Appropriately trained group leaders and lifeguards.
- Pupil behaviour code.

### **School Site Manager / Caretakers Responsibility**

- Plant room maintenance.
- Testing pool water and chemical treatment.
- Cleaning the pool and pool area.
- Regular maintenance and servicing of specialist equipment.
- Emergency procedures.

### **Group Leader's Responsibility**

The group leaders and admin office are to draw up a hydrotherapy timetable. This timetable identifies the pupil groups and staff for each session. It also indicates who is in charge for each session.

The group leader is responsible for ensuring:

- Appropriately qualified staff and adults are available for the session.
- Appropriate equipment is available.
- Planning for the session is in place including activity risk assessment.
- Individual pupil risk assessments are adhered to.
- Ensuring all staff understand their roles and responsibilities during each session.
- All staff knows the emergency procedures.
- Any incident is reported in line with school guidance.
- Pupils adhere to behaviour code.

### **Pool side staff' responsibility (Designated Member of Staff)**

The pool side staff member in conjunction with the group leader is responsible for the overall safety of the pupils in the water and their decision is final. The lifesaver must:

- Be suitably dressed for immediate entry into the water if required.
- Be present whilst a session is in progress.
- Scan water at all times to alert all adults in the event of any danger.

## QUALIFICATIONS

The Group leader should be appropriately trained to lead the session. When the pool is being used for activities other than the teaching of swimming the group leader must receive permission, advice and guidance from the Headteacher, Assistant head's or child care manager.

One of the following qualifications would be deemed appropriate when the teaching of swimming takes place:

- ASA Assistant Teacher Certificate (Swimming for People with Disabilities)
- ASA Level 1 Certificate for Teaching (Swimming for People with Disabilities)
- Halliwick Association of Swimming Therapy Course.

## **NORMAL OPERATING PROCEDURES**

The pool is maintained by the site manager and/or the caretaker who will check the safety of the water and the pool area. They will carry out the covering and uncovering of the pool and ensure the pool area is cleaned daily when in use. Any faults or difficulties with the condition of the pool or equipment should be reported to the caretaker either directly or through the admin office.

- One person should be in charge of the session (the group leader). All staff, especially temporary helpers, should know who this person is.
- Outdoor shoes will be left in the seating area outside the pool main entrance or overshoes worn in the changing rooms and pool area.
- Entry into the pool and changing area is through an electronically fobbed door which must be closed at all times.
- No one is permitted into the pool area without a group leader being present.
- No one must swim unless they are in a group of 3. One of whom must be a designated pool side staff on the pool side.
- All staff should know the pool evacuation procedure.
- No running.
- No diving.
- No dangerous or irresponsible behaviour.
- Pupils should be encouraged to use the toilets before going into the pool.
- If applicable students must wear the correct fitting swimming pants / nappy
- No one should enter the pool with an infectious disease or skin complaint.
- No food or drink allowed in the pool area.
- No pupil or member of staff will be in the water for longer than 30 minutes at a time without a 10 minute break.
- Drinking water is available from a jug in the pool area.

### **Maintenance Arrangements**

Daily pool maintenance is completed by the Caretaker. Checks are carried out on water, cleaning, maintenance of the plant room, equipment and general health and safety.

The following procedures are undertaken at the intervals stated:

### **Daily Checks/Duties**

- Check Emergency alarms.
- Check Emergency equipment and in position.
- Three daily checks on pH, disinfectant and clarity of water.
- Remove debris floating on the surface of the swimming pool.
- Ensure that filters, pumps, etc. are operating satisfactorily.
- Inspect and check emergency lighting.
- Clean changing areas with disinfectant and clean surrounds.
- Floor thoroughly cleansed, with pool water, by a combination of hosing, mopping and scrubbing.
- Clean the floor of the pool.

## **Weekly Checks/Duties**

- Thoroughly clean Pool surround and equipment.
- Clean surface water skimmer baskets of debris.
- Backwash and ensure that the equipment is functioning efficiently.
- Sample and test for residual disinfectant.
- On Friday's, if the pool is not in use over the week-end, following the last swimming session, ensure that all equipment is functioning efficiently and left operational.

## **Monthly**

- Check level transfer channels drained and cleaned.
- Take a sample of water and send to Laboratory for microbiological examination.

## **Three Monthly**

- Check lighting and ensure that bottom of pool is visible at all times.

## **Annual**

- Obtain Electrical test certificate (Mains Wiring – 5 yearly). Transportable and portable electrical equipment to be inspected.

## **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

All staff must know and adhere to emergency procedures. These procedures need to be regularly practiced, particularly at the beginning of each term and on induction for new staff or user groups. Everyone must be aware of the location of the following:

- Emergency button
- First aid kit
- Fire procedures

A key role for poolside staff is to remove or substantially reduce the chances of pupils getting into difficulties whilst in the water. Preventing the situation is the prime objective, but when an incident does occur it is important that all staff know what action is to be taken.

### **Action to be taken in the event of Student in Difficulty**

#### **Action by group leader**

This action must be carried out immediately if has been observed that a pupil is in difficulty, whether the group leader is required to enter the pool or not.

- Assess the situation
- Alert pool staff verbally of an incident occurring and press the emergency button, (only operational during the school day 9.30am -3-00pm) this warns staff immediately that there is a problem and you may need assistance
- Carry out the rescue procedures as per your training, getting the pupil / adult to the side of the pool as quickly and as safely as possible.
- Carry out First Aid procedures until the first aider arrives and assess whether emergency services is required.
- If an ambulance is required it will be requested by admin staff on instructions from the first aider.
- As soon as incident is over, complete appropriate report forms and take to senior management immediately, and ensure a debrief takes place.

### **Action by other staff**

This procedure should be carried out immediately after the alarm has been raised.

- Assess the situation.
- Help clear the pool or bring pupils / adults to the side of the pool depending on severity of the incident.
- Assist in lifting the pupil / adult from the pool and in giving first aid as per training,
- Continue to help supervise pupils on the poolside until the incident is over.

### **Action to be taken in the event of a Casualty being discovered on the pool floor**

- On discovering the casualty the alarm must be raised immediately.
- Emergency services should be contacted immediately; explaining the situation.
- Enter the pool and attempt to rescue the casualty. (pool depth is 1.2mts).
- Once casualty has been removed from the water, commence CPR as trained.
- Continue with CPR until emergency services arrive and take charge of the situation.
- Report the incident to senior management.

### **Total Evacuation (Fire)**

ALL STAFF should be familiarised with all means of escape from the building and the appropriate procedures in a total evacuation of the school.

The fire alarm will be activated for any emergency except for a pool incident. If the fire alarm sounds then there is a fire. The fire evacuation procedures plan can be found on the wall.

### **Assembly Point**

Location of the assembly point will be identified in the fire evacuation procedure plans.

### **Emergency Bag for Evacuation**

The emergency bag containing foil blankets and blue over shoes (which must be put over bare feet) can be found in the storage cupboard on the right hand side in the changing room. This must be taken out on evacuation by a member of staff in the pool area.

### **Action in the event of a fire**

- On hearing the fire alarm the group leader will clear the pool of all pupils / adults.
- The class teachers will assist in clearing the students from the water in a calming reassuring manner.
- The group leader will open the fire exit doors and collect the emergency bag and give out overshoes and blankets to those who require them.
- The pupils will be evacuated through the designated emergency exits and escorted from the building to the designated assembly point.
- A staff member will ensure that all pupils are evacuated from the pool area.
- A head count will take place when all pupils / staff are assembled at the designated assembly point.

### **Action to be taken in the event of an escape of Toxic Gas**

This procedure is written on the basis that relevant gases can be liberated by the handling or mixing of chemicals. Generally, these chemicals will be confined to the plant room or store room, but may leak onto the poolside.

### **Action to be taken by all staff**

- Upon discovering a release of toxic gas, clear the pool immediately and evacuate the building IMMEDIATELY.
- Activate fire alarm.
- Do not stop to pick up belongings, just leave.
- The group leader will make sure everyone is out of the pool and escort students to the assembly point
- A teacher will make sure changing room is empty.
- Assemble at assembly point.

### **NOTE:-**

In the event of a toxic gas being released into the atmosphere within any part of the building, the emergency services MUST be called. It should be noted that Fire, Police and Ambulance will respond to an emergency call involving the release of toxic gas and you should expect firemen to arrive wearing full breathing apparatus. Prevent anyone re-entering the building until the emergency services say that it is safe to do so.

### **Action to be taken in the event of a lighting failure**

The following action is to be taken by all staff:

- Clear the pool immediately, instructing pupils to change and leave the poolside
- Make way out into corridor and head count.
- Call for site manager / caretaker

### **Lack of water clarity**

If the water is cloudy or has a milky appearance then the pool is to be closed and not opened until tests have taken place and the situation has been rectified

### **Structural failure**

If there is any sign of structural failure whilst the pool is in use, close immediately and follow procedure of emergency evacuation, also alerting management straight away

## **CONTAMINATION PROCEDURE**

This procedure outlines the steps to be taken in the event of pool contamination by blood, vomit or faeces. Events are categorised as minor (green), moderate (amber) and severe (red); depending on the risk of infection involved. Types of incident can be grouped as follows:

- Minor contamination - Small amounts of blood, e.g. a nose bleed. Very small amounts of vomit (<5ml).
- Moderate contamination - Significant amounts of blood. Vomit (if no confirmed gastrointestinal infection). Solid faeces.
- Severe contamination - Runny faeces. Vomit if the user is known to be suffering from a gastrointestinal infection.

### **Action to be taken**

**Minor Contamination** - No action is required by session staff or pool management. The contaminant will quickly disperse and any germs present will be killed by the residual disinfectant.

**Moderate Contamination** - The following steps are to be taken by session staff

- Immediately clear the pool of pupils.
- In the case of faeces and vomit, staff should remove the contaminant from the pool using a scoop or fine mesh net and flush down the toilet (not put in any pool drains). There must be certainty that all the faeces have been captured and disposed of. If not, and there is possible widespread distribution of the faeces in the pool, then the pool must be closed and treated as a severe incident.
- Inform estates manager / caretaker (pool management) of the incident.
- Action by site management:
  - All equipment that has been used in the removal process should be disinfected using a 1% solution of hypochlorite, by site management.
  - Depending of the severity of the incident, the pool should remain closed to users for between 60 and 120 minutes, to allow the disinfectant to kill any germs present.
  - As a precaution, chlorine levels can be raised by 1 ppm for 24 hours if desired.
  - Any blood spillages on the poolside should not be washed into the pool or poolside drains and channels. Instead, like blood spillage anywhere in the building, it should be dealt with using strong disinfectant – of a concentration equivalent to 10,000mg/l of available chlorine. A 10:1 dilution of the sodium hypochlorite in use may be convenient.
  - Using disposable latex gloves, the blood should be covered with paper towels gently flooded with the disinfectant and left for at least two minutes before it is cleared away. On the poolside, the affected area can then be washed with pool water (and the washings disposed of not in the pool). Elsewhere, the disinfected area should be washed with water and detergent and, if possible, left to dry.
  - The bagged paper towels and gloves are classed as offensive/hygiene waste, yellow bags

**3. Severe Contamination**, the following instructions to be followed by session staff:

- Staff running the session should immediately clear the pool and attempt to remove the contaminant from the pool using a scoop or fine mesh net and flush down the toilet.
- Inform site management of the incident, who should close the pool immediately.
- Action by site management:
  - Super chlorinate to 20mg/l and adjust the pH to 7.2 and leave for at least 24 hours.
  - All equipment that has been used in the removal process should be disinfected using a 1% solution of hypochlorite.
  - Vacuum and sweep the pool.
  - Make sure the pool treatment plant is operating as it should.
  - Backwash and rinse the filters.
  - Allow the filter media to settle by running to drain for a few minutes before reconnecting the filter to the pool.
  - When the disinfectant residual and pH are at normal levels for the pool, re-open.